

Anti-Slavery Office,
New York, 14 March, 1863.

My Dear Garrison,

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Your letter by Mr. Phillips
was duly received. Both Mary Anne
and myself are very much obliged
to you for taking so much trouble to
test the truth of the strange message
from James Lathrop. Why such a
communication, so unlike any-
thing she ever received before, should
have come to her, is inexplicable.
There was nothing in the surrounding
circumstances to suggest an expla-
nation. Perhaps, on some future oc-
casion, an explanation may be
offered; if so, I will let you know.

I had a talk with Wendell

about England, and so did Theodore. We set the subject before him in as strong a light as possible; and from what he said, I feel almost certain that he will consent to go, provided the friends of the cause on the other side of the water shall be found to concur in opinion with us as to the wisdom of the measure. There ~~was~~^{is} certainly great force in his remark, that our friends in England have given no hint of a desire on their part to receive a visit from him, or ^{from} any other American Abolitionist; and we shall agree, I think, that he ought not to go without their express and hearty concurrence, and an assurance of their earnest cooperation. In

this view of the case, I have, with
Wendell's concurrence, written a
letter to Mr. Chesson, by this day's
steamer, laying the matter open for
his consideration, and inviting
through him an expression of the
judgment and the wish of our
transatlantic friends. I have ex-
plained to him ~~that~~ ^{that} the suggestion
of such a mission came from Mr.
Godkin, an Englishman, well ac-
quainted with the state of opinion
on both sides of the water, and ~~that~~
that we have given it our attention,
not on any personal grounds what-
ever, but from our anxiety to do
the best thing for the cause. I have
told him that there is no lack of
labor for Mrs. Phillips at home;
but on the contrary, an open door
of usefulness everywhere; that he

would consent to go ^{abroad} only upon the conviction that he could, for the time being, do more for the cause there than here; and that the judgment of our English friends is needed to throw light upon that question. Mr. Chesson will probably answer my letter promptly, and if he does, we shall ^{soon} know what to do next, and can either lay aside or urge forward the plan as shall then seem best. If Mr. Chesson responds, on behalf of our friends in England, in accordance with the views expressed by Mr. Godkin, I feel sure that Wendell will consent to go. I should be glad to see you go with him, but I fear that the absence of both at the same time might be prejudicial to the cause here, in some not improbable emergency. In regard to Gerrit Smith, I have no doubt that he would

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do a great work in England, but
I should not rely upon his judgment
so implicitly as I should upon that
of Mr. Phillips; and besides, between
ourselves, his friends are not without
anxiety in regard ^{a possible return of} the malady ~~which~~
under which he so lately suffered. If
he could go with Mr. Phillips, it
would indeed be just the thing.

A word on another point:
If Mr. Phillips goes, it is very im-
portant, it seems to me, that he
should be accompanied by some
person capable of reporting all
his movements for the American
press—not a weak, garrulous,
toadying man, but one capable
of seeing just what needs to be
seen, and speaking just what

needs to be spoken, with a view
to the best effect on both sides
of the water. If our dear Theodore
Nixon could only go! I have
suggested the matter to him, but
he says it will be utterly im-
possible for him to leave.

The approaching confinement
of his wife, if there were no other
reason, would be an imperative
bar to the voyage. He insists
that I ought to go. Of course it
would be a great joy to me
to visit England in such company,
but I cannot afford the expense,
to say nothing of the difficulties in
the way of leaving my post;
and besides, I am far from

thinking myself the best man
to be Mr. Phillips's yokefellow
on such a mission.

As to the plan you propose for
the aid of our eloquent coadjutor,
George Thompson, I only wish I
could see how to carry it into
effect, and that right speedily.
Perhaps, if Phillips goes to England,
the representations he will be
able to make upon his return as
to the value of Mr. Thompson's
labors will be such as cannot
fail to command a liberal
offering to him from the friends
of freedom here. Meanwhile, I
will gladly do what I can to
promote your plan.

I am sorry to hear of the illness of some members of your family, and hope they are well ere now. Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Tavin unite with me in affectionate remembrance of them all, and in warm regard for yourself.

I am, my dear Garrison,

Yours, faithfully,

Oliver Johnson.

P. S. Is it not time to look for a place for our annual meeting? Why not take Cheever's Church again? I only wait to be directed by the Committee.

O. J.